V.

"MAD ANN."

March 22, 1858, it was the writer's pleasure to visit Mrs Smith, the aged mother of the late William Smith, who resided five and a half miles north of Covington, on Jackson's River. She had been well acquainted with "Mad Ann," and related some recollections of this noted character of pioneer history.

She was of English birth, and claimed to have hailed from Liverpool. Her first husband was a Mr Trotter, who was drowned in Jacksons River near the residence of the late Squire Alexander McClintic. The water was quite shallow, but being in a state of intoxication he perished in the ripples, leaving a widow and two sons, William and John. William Trotter, in 1858, was living at Point Pleasant.

Mrs Trotter lived awhile as one of the nearest neighbors of the Smith family. Her property was a little rude log hut, three acres of arable land, two cows, two pigs, and a horse. Before her reason became impaired she was a person of fine sense, and was much better educated than the generality of females at her day. As to her moral reputation in later life, she was not on

a par with Cæsar's wife—above suspicion. Yet she paid her debts, would not steal, or seek revenge for any insult in stealthy ways.

She made frequent journeys to Point Pleasant to carry powder and lead for the use of the troops stationed there to check Indian incursions. She became very erratic in later life, her mind becoming unsettled by grief over the death of one Baily, supposed to have been killed by the Indians. In person she was quite small, and after her mental troubles preferred to wear man's attire. She rode "Liverpool," a black, blaze-faced pony, and carried her rifle and shot pouch. She chewed tobacco, drank liquor, and thought it very becoming to use profane language.

She was regarded as perfectly harmless, unless irritated. Then she would shoot just as quickly as the triggers would work. On her last visit to Alleghany she went into camp and remained most of the summer, and the neighbors furnished her with with provisions cheerfully and plentifully. Mrs Smith's husband having lost his horses by water murrain, hired "Liverpool" to plow corn; paid well for his use, put him in good order, and so poor Ann had a good fat horse to ride back to Ohio when her visit ended in the fall, and she soon after died.

Only one incident occurred to mar the pleasure of her last visit. One night some mischievous persons out coon hunting molested her camp by throwing stones. She was soon out after them with her rifle, and it was with difficulty they escaped by flight and concealment. They were thus made to know how it

feels to be hunted themselves, and quiet prevailed after that.

She had a great many marvelous tales of adventure with the Indians to relate, but Mrs Smith thought they were mostly fanciful. The one she would tell the oftenest was that when pursued by the Indians she took refuge in a swamp, and by lying in the water all night made her pursuers lose her trail, and they could not track her the next day. Mrs Smith thought the following to be a true occurrence:

A man, to annoy "Mad Ann" and to amuse himself and others to see how she would talk, weep, and rave, told her that one of her sons was dead. As was expected, she was greatly distressed and was very demonstrative in her expressions of grief, until she heard it was all in fun. When she met the young man afterwards she reminded him of the cruel jest, and told him in a most solemn manner that he would be the first to die in his neighborhood. What she foretold actually occurred the following summer, almost a year afterwards. It was a striking coincidence, to say the least.

She died in Kanawha, aged, as was supposed, one hundred and five years. The Hon. Virgil Lewis has prepared an interesting sketch of this remarkable person, and her fame is assured as long as the history of pioneer adventure has interested readers, and that will be as long as the State of West Virginia has a local habitation and a name.